

PR/22/06

## **SKY ITALIA BOOSTS EUTELSAT HOT BIRD™ CAPACITY TO SUPPORT LAUNCH OF SKY HD**

Paris, 2 May 2006

SKY Italia, Italy's leading pay-TV platform which broadcasts exclusively from Eutelsat's HOT BIRD™ video neighbourhood, has unveiled its planning for the launch this month in Italy of its new SKY HD package dedicated to HDTV content.

In order to support its expansion into HDTV, SKY Italia began leasing an additional HOT BIRD™ transponder on 1 May, taking its total capacity used across Eutelsat's HOT BIRD satellites to 18 transponders. The new service will launch on 17 May with live coverage of the European Champions League Cup Final. In June, SKY Italia will provide full coverage of the 2006 FIFA World Cup™, enabling subscribers with HD-ready equipment to benefit from panoramic views and razor-sharp detail of all 64 matches. Broadcasting in DVB S2 with MPEG4 compression, SKY Italia will be able to accommodate up to five HDTV channels in a single HOT BIRD™ transponder.

Following the 2006 FIFA World Cup™, SKY Italia will launch its HD bouquet, with channels dedicated to movies, sports and general entertainment. Access to the SKY HD package will cost €7 per month, in addition to the main subscription. Subscriptions will be available from 8 May.

Commenting on the upcoming HD launch, Giuliano Berretta, Eutelsat CEO said "We are delighted that our HOT BIRD™ video neighbourhood, which ten years ago accompanied the launch of Europe's first digital video channels in DVB, is also the platform of choice for commercial HDTV broadcasting to satellite homes. SKY Italia's move into HD further consolidates the important role it plays in Italy's dynamic television market and opens the door to a new broadcasting experience for Italian TV homes".

This new offer will take SKY Italia's channel line-up to over 160 TV and radio channels serving a subscriber base in Italy of more than 3.6 million homes.

### **About Eutelsat Communications**

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is the holding company of Eutelsat S.A. The Group is a leading satellite operator with capacity commercialised on 23 satellites providing coverage over the entire European continent, as well as the Middle East, Africa, India and significant parts of Asia and the Americas. The Group is one of the world's three leading satellite operators in terms of revenues. Its satellites are used for broadcasting nearly 1,800 TV and 900 radio stations to more than 120 million cable and satellite homes. The Group also provides TV contribution services, corporate networks, mobile positioning and communications, Internet backbone connectivity and broadband access for terrestrial, maritime and inflight applications. Eutelsat Communications is headquartered in Paris, and the Group's workforce comprises over 480 from 27 countries.

[www.eutelsat.com](http://www.eutelsat.com)

### **For further information**

#### **Press**

Vanessa O'Connor

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88

[voconnor@eutelsat.fr](mailto:voconnor@eutelsat.fr)

Frédérique Gautier

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88

[fgautier@eutelsat.fr](mailto:fgautier@eutelsat.fr)

#### **Investors**

Gilles Janvier

Tel: +33 1 53 98 35 35

[investors@eutelsat-communications.com](mailto:investors@eutelsat-communications.com)